

years, U.S. agriculture has tripled food and fiber production while usage of land, energy, fertilizer and other inputs has remained steady.

Early in the first session of this Congress, several of my Republican colleagues and I introduced a slate of climate-friendly and farmer-focused bills. These bills are driven by commonsense solutions to benefit our environment and our farm industry.

Our farmers, ranchers, foresters, and producers are the original climate champions. While there is more to be done, we must prevent efforts to fundamentally upend our commodity, conservation, and crop insurance programs to appease Washington think tanks. We must also reject complicating our programs and making climate the focus of every title of the upcoming farm bill reauthorization.

Madam Speaker, under the umbrella of natural land solutions, which includes farmers that grow crops, livestock, and our foresters, the research has shown that at this moment, based on the technology they use, they are responsible for sequestering 6.1 gigatons of carbon annually, greenhouse gas emissions.

To put that into perspective, that takes care of all the greenhouse gas emissions that are emitted on those lands, plus sequestering an additional 10.1 percent. So truly, the American farmer, rancher, and forester are the climate change champions anywhere in the world because of our science, technology, and innovation.

We must ensure agriculture production remains viable in rural America to keep production from increasing in areas of the world with lower environmental standards, worse labor conditions, and fewer food safety considerations. And that is why a robust safety net is critical to keeping farms and production here in the United States while lowering overall global greenhouse gas emissions.

Madam Speaker, our country and our farmers face enormous and immediate challenges including higher food prices, record inflation, and input costs, attacks on our energy independence, crop-protection tools, and dependable labor.

Now, these are the issues I hear about as I travel my district and the country. These are the issues we should be addressing.

I hope at the end of the day we recognize that our voluntary, locally led, incentive-based conservation system is working as intended, and that we must not undermine its continued success in supporting the environment and producers.

American agriculture is science. American agriculture is technology. And American agriculture is innovation. The demands of a 21st century farm economy, and economically viable climate solutions, depend on tools and policies that continue to unleash and increase the United States agriculture productivity.

#### VIRGIN ISLANDS HISTORY

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. STANTON). The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from the Virgin Islands (Ms. PLASKETT) for 5 minutes.

Ms. PLASKETT. Mr. Speaker, the Virgin Islands and its people speak of great resilience. We are a people rich in history and agriculture, struggles and triumphs in the face of disenfranchisement.

March 31, 2022, marked 104 years that the Virgin Islands of the United States have been part of the United States. Our islands were acquired by the United States in the costliest per-acre sale in U.S. land purchase. We became the most easterly point of the United States, and served to protect the Caribbean Basin and the Panama Canal, particularly during World War I.

The sale of the Danish West Indies pulled Denmark out of depression and gave them the capital resources, gold bullion, necessary for them to become the happiest country that we know today. The brutal slavery and serf system that they inflicted on my ancestors, however, was not a happy time.

During the transfer of ceremonies on March 31, 1917, the people of the Virgin Islands, my people, were citizens of no country. All four of my grandparents were alive and living on the island of St. Croix at the time of the transfer.

Only qualified Danish citizens living in Denmark were able to vote in the plebiscite.

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Of my eight great-grandparents, I believe one may have met the land and income requirement mandatory to be able to vote. Only one would have been able to vote for his destiny.

And after the purchase, those living in the territory, my grandparents, great-grandparents, aunts, uncles, my family, were citizens of no country, nowhere, for 10 years.

Yet, after becoming citizens, Virgin Islanders came immediately to Washington and petitioned, pleaded to be part of the draft. You see, Virgin Islanders, like the other territories, serve and give the ultimate sacrifice in far greater number per capita than those Americans on the mainland. We wanted and still are willing to take on the responsibility, not just the privilege.

Until the United States began ownership of territories, largely comprised of minority, Black and Brown people, disenfranchisement of territories was a temporary condition. From the 1787 Northwest Ordinance until the acquisition of Puerto Rico, lands were deemed territories with the expectation that they would become States.

The disenfranchisement and unequal treatment of people in the Virgin Islands are de jure law. The Insular Cases decided at the turn of the century in the Plessy v. Ferguson-era by the Supreme Court, established a doctrine of separate and unequal status for overseas territories.

However, the disenfranchisement and unequal treatment continues today through court cases in the Bush, Obama, Trump, and now Biden administration, through their oral and written arguments to the Supreme Court, as well as my own colleagues, Congress' unwillingness to grant equal treatment requests made by representatives from the territories.

My fight in Washington has been to level and create equity, to counter the many ways that such disenfranchisement affects our lives, Federal funding, healthcare access, veterans' benefits, structural damage after natural disasters due to longstanding inequitable funding.

It is my deepest honor to be grounded by my history, my parents, and my ancestors from the Virgin Islands, many of whom have played an integral role in the history of this Nation, long even before we were a part of this country; from Denmark Vesey, leader of the Charleston, South Carolina, slave revolt; David Levy Yulee, the first Jewish Senator in the United States; William Leidesdorff, the founder of San Francisco; Edward Wilmot Blyden, one of the founders of Liberia; even today, my predecessor, the first female physician of this body as a Member of Congress, Donna Christensen; and even this weekend, NCAA Women's Basketball Champion, Aliyah Boston.

Our contributions to this Nation are undisputed, and 104 years after our transfer from Denmark to the U.S. possession, our claim to full and inviolable rights as citizens of this country are long overdue.

#### COMMUNITY PROJECT FUNDING

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Michigan (Ms. TLAIB) for 5 minutes.

Ms. TLAIB. Mr. Speaker, I rise as a proud Member to support the 13th Congressional District.

My district is the third poorest Congressional District in the country, and direct funding and aid to support our most vulnerable communities is so critical to communities like mine.

I want to take a moment to uplift the work that my team and I have done to deliver for our residents through the community projects funding.

I don't know if folks know, but we have the oldest Boys and Girls Club in the Nation, and they are going to see \$2 million in investments to improve the facility in Highland Park so more of our young people can come into a building that is safe and a building that is going to be able to help them thrive.

Also, the Urban Neighborhoods Initiative's Southwest Detroit Creative Connections Collaborative; they are going to be able to create a safe space, community space for our families, especially our youth. This is the community I grew up in, with 20 different ethnicities.